[*Note.*—An asterisk * at the commencement of a speech indicates revision by the member.

SRI V. K. RAMASWAMY MUDALIYAR: Sir, I want to bring to your notice that some ten days back, I gave notice of a matter under rule 41. It has not been taken up so far and I would like to know what happened to it.

MR. SPEAKER: I have no idea. I will find out.

II.—INFORMATION *RE*: STRENGTH OF THE MAIN OPPOSITION PARTY.

SRI N. K. PALANISAMI: Sir, on a point of information. You were pleased to inform us the other day that you have received intimation from two Members of the Indian National Democratic Congress Legislature Party that they have resigned from that party and so they might be allotted separate seats in the House. I want to know whether separate seats have been allotted to them. Secondly, I want to know whether separate seats will be reserved for other members of the party if and when they are compelled to resign from the party and seek separate seats. Thirdly, I want to know the position of the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member seems to be very very persistently curious about this matter. I may, however, tell the House that in India's Constitution, no mention is made of the Leader of the Opposition as a constitutional necessity or as an Officer of the House. But under the parliamentary system, the Speaker is the ultimate authority to recognise and decide upon, in the case of a number of parties in the Opposition as to which party should be recognized as the Official Opposition Party. In the House of Commons, the recognition of an Official Opposition Party involves three factors: one, that it is an organized party both inside and outside the House, secondly, that it is numerically the largest minority party and thirdly, that it is the heir-apparent of the administration in the sense that it can form an alternative Government. In our Assembly, we have decided or rather considered it desirable that for a party to be recognized as the main Opposition party, it should have a strength of 21 members which is the number fixed for the quorum of the House. I had therefore recognized the Indian National Democratic Congress Legislature Party which had a strength of 21—I think 22—as the main opposition, and its leader Sri V. K. Ramaswamy Mudaliyar as the Leader of the Opposition. Now that two members have resigned from that party, that party will hereafter be only an Opposition Group and Sri V. K. Ramaswamy Mudaliyar instead of being the Leader of the Opposition, will only be the Leader of that group. In view of the numerical strength of that party, so far as I am now aware of, I am still recognizing that party as the first Opposition Party in this House.

As regards the question whether I am going to reserve seats in the House for others who may resign later, I should say that it is hypothetical question when that contingency arises, I shall consider the question. I hope I have satisfied the curiosity of the hon. Member.

III.—CALLING ATTENTION TO FAILURE OF MONSOON IN TIRUPATHUR TALUK.

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Member, Sri N. V. Chockalingam, will now call the attention of the Hon. the Minister for Revenue to a matter of urgent public importance, viz., failure of monsoon in Tirupathur taluk, Ramanathapuram district, resulting in wholesale failure of crops in that taluk.

[27th April 1960

SRI N. V. CHOCKALINGAM: கனம் தலைவர் அவர்களே, இராமனாதபுரம் ஜில்லா, திருப்பத்தூர் தாலூகாவில் 1959–60-ம் வருஷத்தில் பருவ மழை தவறி விளைவுக்கு வராததால் வரி வஜா செய்வதுடன் அங்குள்ள முன் பசலி பாக்கிகளையும் தக்காவிக் கடன்கள் போன்றவைகளையும் இப்பொழுது வசூலிக்காமல் அடுத்த வருஷம் விளைவுகளை எதிர்பார்த்து வசூலிக்கும் அளவில் ஒத்திவைக்க வேண்டும் என்றும், அத்துடன் பஞ்ச நிவாரணக் கடைகளையும் பஞ்ச நிவாரண வேலைகளையும் ஆரம்பிக்க வேண்டும் என்பது அவசியமும் நியாயமுமாக இருக்கிறது என்பதைச் சொல்லிக் கொள்ளுகிறேன்.

THE HON. SRI M. A. MANICKAVELU: Sir, the Government Tirupathur taluk of Ramanathapuram district covers the whole of Tirupathur (Z.A.) taluk and portions of Kandadevi and Sivaganga (Z.A.) taluk.

Except a small extent of 324·45 acres benefited by the Periyar Extended System, the remaining area in the taluk is covered by rain-fed taluks. On account of failure of rains during the monsoon period commencing from September 1959, wet crops were not successfully raised in most parts and even in the parts where they were raised, the crops withered away. The outturn was less than four annas or nil over an extent of 38,598 acres out of a total extent of 51,899 acres of wet lands. The Collector of Ramanathapuram has submitted certain proposals for the grant of special remission for wet lands and other concessions in the matter of collection of land revenue and loans for the entire Government Tirupathur taluk in the current fasli 1369 and these proposals are under examination. There was no failure of dry crops.

No famine conditions actually prevail in the taluk. However, in order to provide employment to the agricultural labourers, the Collector has proposed to start Minor Irrigation Works immediately and in addition to this, Local Development Works for the construction of school buildings and laying of roads have been proposed. Some of these works are in progress and others will be taken up soon. The Government have therefore taken stock of the situation in Tirupathur taluk and are taking adequate relief measures.

IV.—ANNOUNCEMENT *RE* THE MADRAS (TRANSFERRED TERRITORY) EXTENSION OF LAWS BILL 1960.

MR. SPEAKER: I have to announce to the House that the Governor has given his recommendation for the introduction in and consideration by the Madras Legislative Assembly the Madras (Transferred Territory) Extension of Laws Bill, 1960.

V.—GOVERNMENT BILLS.

(1) THE MADRAS (TRANSFERRED TERRITORY) EXTENSION OF LAWS BILL, 1960.

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM: Sir, I beg to move—

"That leave be granted for the introduction of the Madras (Transferred Territory) Extension of Laws Bill, 1960."

MR. SPEAKER: The question is—

"That leave be granted for the introduction of the Madras (Transferred Territory) Extension of Laws Bill, 1960."

The motion was put and carried and leave was granted.

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a Published in the *Fort St. George Gazette* Extraordinary, dated 7th April 1960.